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tional question as the only means of sustaining himself in his present fallen condition. . . . He is wholly selfish & I am satisfied has no patriotism" (II, 457-9). From passages of similar frankness, we gain not only Polk's estimate of the character and purposes of his associates, but also a conviction of his own love of the Union and his condemnation of self-seeking and partnership that placed devotion to party above principle.

Indeed, not only does the diary present Polk in a new light as a statesman, but it also increases our respect for him as a man. Although he appears narrow, cold some times, indeed, prejudiced and inclined to place a low estimate upon the motives of men in general, nevertheless he is revealed as possessing a large measure of good judgment, decision, firmness and courage, as well as directness and perseverance, a man of force, who dominated his Cabinet and successfully carried to conclusion all of the measures he had determined upon at the opening of his administration.

The editor has taken few liberties with the text, beyond leaving out repetitions, supplying in brackets obvious omissions, and modernizing the punctuation. Professor Quaife contributes a short biographical sketch of Polk and some brief and helpful notes, which might have been multiplied and extended to advantage. The one adverse criticism upon the editor's work relates to the index, which is far from complete. Several excellent reproductions of portraits of Polk are given, and the press work is all that could be desired.

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**Rowntree, B. S. *Land and Labour: Lessons from Belgium.* Pp. xx, 633.**

Price, \$3.50. New York: Macmillan Company, 1910.

Mr. Rowntree was led by his study of poverty in England to investigate the connection between social conditions and the system of land tenure in various European countries. But as this task soon proved too vast, he limited himself to the single country of Belgium, and the present volume is the result. The study is, therefore, a sociological, quite as much as a purely industrial or agricultural one; for the questions ever present in the mind of the author were apparently "why did this come to be?" and "how can it be remedied?" The volume is divided into six parts, of which the first deals with the social and economic conditions of Belgium; the second considers the industrial life; the third the agricultural; the fourth the factors of education, transportation, and taxation; the fifth, which is the longest, discusses the standard of life, including such problems as co-operation, intemperance, housing, pauperism, unemployment, etc. The last part presents the author's conclusions.

A mere summary of the contents cannot give a fair idea of the comprehensive scope of the work or of the labor involved in its preparation. The author states that it is the result of "four years' close study." There were no census reports from which data could be secured, and in some cases, especially in the investigation of land ownership, mortgages, etc.,

special investigations had to be made, involving enormous labor and large expenditures. In these investigations, however, the Belgium government gave its assistance, or lent its authority, and the result is almost equivalent to a census report on agricultural conditions. It is along these lines that the volume is at once most interesting and most valuable.

Belgium is densely populated and supports a large industrial as well as agricultural population. The land is subdivided into numerous small holdings, at least one in ten persons owning some land, and forty-seven per cent of the soil being held by persons whose holdings do not exceed 100 acres each. The average size of the farm in Belgium is 14.5 acres as compared with 146.6 acres in the United States. So great is the land hunger among the peasantry, however, that the farms are often too small for the most economical working, and the parcels are widely scattered. One chart, compiled by the author, shows a farm of twenty-eight acres split up into thirty-two different plots, the farthest of which were thirty-five minutes' walk from the farm house. As a result of this minute subdivision of the land, little machinery is used, rents are high, and cultivation is intensive and laborious.

As an industrial center Belgium shows extraordinary activity and produces a great variety of goods. But in industry as in agriculture, profitable production is purchased at the cost of low wages and long hours. The workers seem often underfed, the standard of living is low, illiteracy is common, the consumption of alcohol is large, and the disbursement of poor relief tends to pauperize the community. On the other hand, Belgium has valuable lessons, at least for England, in her policy of afforestation, in the construction of light, cheap railways, and in the aid given workingmen in the purchase of their homes. But much remains to be done to improve economic conditions and develop the industrial capabilities of the people. Among these remedial measures the author names factory legislation, compulsory education, restriction of the liquor traffic, and the reform of the system of poor relief. But a higher standard of life among the working people themselves is also necessary, and a better organization of their trade unions.

He would be a captious critic who would complain of this volume. In writing it Mr. Rowntree has performed a service which is possible for but few private investigators on account of the large expenditure of time and money involved. The work has been done in a most careful and painstaking fashion, and the results are thoroughly trustworthy and instructive. High praise must be accorded the volume as a whole. The impression is unavoidable, however, in reading the chapters on agricultural conditions, that they were written by a townsman rather than by an agriculturist, though this does not detract from their value as an economic study. Not merely may Englishmen derive profitable suggestions from the chapters on land tenure, forestry, railway building, etc., but Americans also should take to heart the lessons of Belgium's experience before Old-World conditions of land ownership and industrialism develop further in this country.

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